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Contact: 97-51  
Jay Ziegler  
Kirsten Powers  
Christine Wilkas  
(202) 395-3230

**U.S.-EU ACHIEVE BREAKTHROUGH ON MRA NEGOTIATIONS**

United States Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky and Commerce Secretary William J. Daley today indicated that outstanding issues with the European Union on a package of Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) have been largely resolved and that overall agreement is expected soon.

“We have achieved a major breakthrough on MRAs and are very hopeful we will conclude an agreement in the next few days,” said U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky. “The MRA package continues the Administration’s emphasis on expanding trade and opening markets in areas where the United States leads the world.”

“The Trans-Atlantic Business Dialogue, in partnership with the Administration, made it possible to reach this point,” said Secretary Daley. “This package would serve to increase U.S. exports by saving manufacturers up to 10% of the cost of delivering U.S. exports to Europe.”

The MRA package covers trade in telecommunications equipment, information technology products, medical devices, pharmaceuticals, and sportscraft. Mutual Recognition Agreements allow products or processes to be assessed for conformity (e.g. testing, inspection, and certification) in the U.S. to EU standards, and vice versa.

The fifteen EU member countries represent the largest market for U.S. goods and services and the MRAs encompass more than \$47 billion in two-way trade.